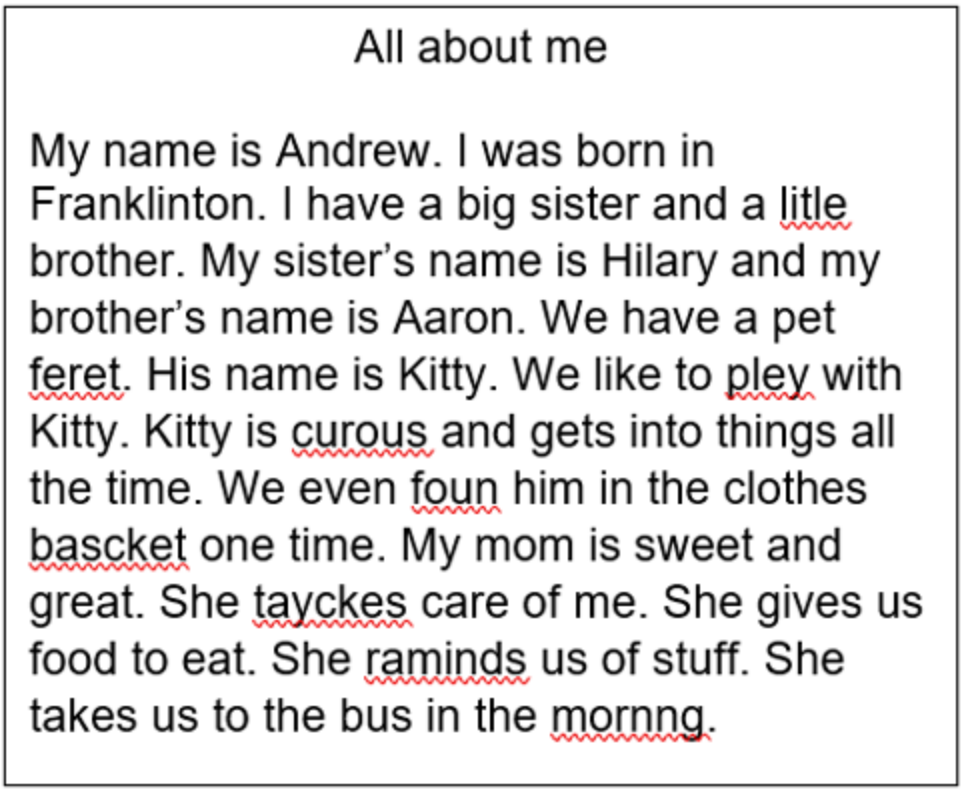
Accommodations Toolkit

Spell Check: Research

This fact sheet on **spell check** is part of the *Accommodations Toolkit* published by the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO). It summarizes information and research findings on spell check as an accommodation[1]. This toolkit also contains a summary of states' accessibility policies for spell check (/nceo/accommodations-toolkit/spell-check-policies).



All about me

My name is Andrew. I was born in Franklinton. I have a big sister and a litle brother. My sister's name is Hilary and my brother's name is Aaron. We have a pet feret. His name is Kitty. We like to pley with Kitty. Kitty is curous and gets into things all the time. We even foun him in the clothes bascket one time. My mom is sweet and great. She tayckes care of me. She gives us food to eat. She raminds us of stuff. She takes us to the bus in the mornng.

What is spell check? Spell check is a software feature that identifies possible misspellings, and either autocorrects or suggests possible corrections (Cullen et al, 2008; MacArthur, 1999). It is sometimes referred to as spell checker, spelling checker, spelling assistance. Spell check can help students correct spelling errors with less time focused on the writing mechanics of spelling which then allows them to concentrate more broadly on developing ideas or content in the writing process (MacArthur, 1999).

What are the research findings on who should use this accommodation? Spell check has been used for students with various disabilities in the elementary grades (Finch & Finch, 2013) and secondary grades (Finizio, 2008; Koretz & Hamilton, 2001). According to research findings, most of the students who receive this accommodation have specific learning disabilities (SLD) (Finizio, 2008; Koretz & Hamilton, 2001).

What are the research findings on implementation of spell check? No studies were identified on the implementation of spell check. Three studies examined the frequency of spell check.

- Two studies examined how frequently students received the spell check accommodation, and both found that spell check was one of the least frequently assigned accommodations at the elementary (Finch & Finch, 2013) and secondary (Koretz & Hamilton, 2001) levels.
- Finizio (2008) examined the match relationship between instructional accommodations and state assessment accommodations documented in the individualized education programs (IEPs) of secondary students with various disabilities, most of whom had SLD. The results indicated that spell checking was mostly used as an instructional accommodation and not generally used on assessments.

What perceptions do students and teachers have about spell check? No studies were found that examined student or teacher perceptions of spell check as an assessment accommodation.

What have we learned overall? Research studies found that spell check is one of least assigned assessment accommodations, though it may be used more often during instruction. It is used for elementary and secondary students with various disabilities, and is most frequently provided to students with SLD. No studies were identified that examined the effect of spell check on student performance. Research is needed on the effect of spell check on the performance of students with different disabilities, including English learners with disabilities. Likewise, there is a need to explore teacher and student perceptions of the spell check accommodation.

Footnotes

[1]

Research on spell checking summarized here is also available in NCEO's searchable *Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Bibliography* (https://nceo.info/Resources/bibliographies):(https://nceo.info/Resources/bibliographies (https://nceo.info/Resources/bibliographies)) and in NCEO syntheses of research from 1999 through 2019 (see summaries for: 1999–2001 (https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/TechReport34.pdf), 2002–2004 (https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/Tech45/Technical45.pdf), 2005–2006 (https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/Tech47/TechReport47.pdf), 2007–2008 (https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/Tech56/TechnicalReport56.pdf), 2009–2010 (https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/Tech65/TechnicalReport65.pdf), 2011–2012 (https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/Synthesis94/Synthesis94.pdf), 2013–2014 (https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/Report402/NCEOReport402.pdf), 2015–2016 (https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/NCEOReport412.pdf), 2017 (https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/NCEOReport423.pdf), 2018 (https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/NCEOReport423.pdf), 2019 (https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/NCEOReport433.pdf)). See the reports and online bibliography for additional information about the criteria used to identify studies included in this fact sheet.

References

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